

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: November 13, 2024

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Joe Lamers, Director, Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance
Heather Wolfgram, Strategy and Performance Project Manager, Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance

Subject: Report from the Director, Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance, requesting authorization to carryover unspent Opioid Settlement Funds allocated to Cohort 1 recipients into FY26

File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

The Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance (SBP) respectfully requests authorization to carryover unspent Opioid Settlement Funds allocated to Cohort 1 project through 12/31/26. This request has a net \$0 tax levy impact.

POLICY

The County Board authorized the Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC) to retain outside counsel under a contingency fee arrangement and to file suit against opioid manufacturers and distributors as the OCC deemed appropriate in [File 17-722](#).

2021 State Act 57 created Section 165.12, Wisconsin State Statutes (State Statutes), relating to the settlement of all or part of the Litigation. Section 165.12(4)(b)2, State Statutes, provides the proceeds from the Settlement Agreement must be deposited in a segregated account (the Opioid Abatement Account), and may be expended only for approved uses for opioid abatement, as provided in the Settlement Agreements.

The Milwaukee County Board approved Resolutions [21-1127](#) and [23-490](#), which authorized Milwaukee County OCC to enter into Settlement Agreements to receive funds from three Opioid Settlement distributors and five pharmacies. The settlements resulted in a net payment of \$111 million to Milwaukee County over 18 years.

Approved County Board Resolution [21-1127](#) called for the establishment of a segregated Opioid Abatement Account that is not part of the general fund. Any unused funds that remain at the end of the year will be carried over to the new year.

BACKGROUND

In February 2023, the Milwaukee County Board adopted [File 23-114](#), granting fund

authorization for \$11 million for 15 projects that would be implemented by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), Medical Examiner’s Office, Office of Emergency Management (OEM), and the Sheriff’s Office. In September 2023, the Milwaukee County Board approved supplemental funds in [File 23-799](#) for four of the first 15 projects. These actions allocated funds to the first cohort of Opioid Settlement Fund projects, as detailed below. All projects met criteria for opioid remediation uses as outlined in the settlement guidance. The initial 15 projects received fund authorization in January 2023. Project funds were to be spent over a three-year period ending on 12/31/25.

Table C: Projects Recommended for Funding in FY 2023, 2024, 2025

Project Title	Remediation Category	Lead Department	Request Amount
Medication Assisted Treatment – Behind the Walls	Treatment	DHHS	\$2,514,909
Medical Examiner Staffing Needs	Other Strategies	Medical Examiner	\$ 2,290,541
Coordination of Opioid Prevention Services Project	Prevention	DHHS	\$4,845,607
Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Capacity	Treatment	DHHS	\$1,821,140
Aging and Disabilities Services Opioid Prevention Project	Prevention	DHHS	\$843,661
Education and Treatment for Justice-Involved Youth	Treatment	DHHS	\$799,190
Harm Reduction Data Analytics	Harm Reduction	OEM	\$719,909
Opioid Treatment in the Prehospital Environment	Treatment	OEM	\$536,550
Homeless Outreach Project	Treatment	DHHS	\$481,570
Opioid Educator- Emergency Medical Services	Harm Reduction	OEM	\$407,798
Harm Reduction Supplies	Harm Reduction	DHHS	\$910,889
Portable Body Cooler	Other Strategies	Medical Examiner	\$192,448
Harm Reduction Kit	Harm Reduction	OEM	\$97,906
Patrol Division Narcan Deployment and Education	Harm Reduction	Sheriff’s Office	\$66,500
Autopsy Carts	Other Strategies	Medical Examiner	\$19,450
Total Amount Requested			\$16,548,068

The process for making allocation recommendations for the Opioid Settlement Funds was led by SBP and developed with input from County stakeholders. This process was presented to Supervisors during the December 2022 board cycle in [File 22-1135](#).

In April 2024, the Milwaukee County Board received [File 24-448](#), an informational 2023 Annual Report outlining the opioid epidemic's impact nationally and locally, Milwaukee County's plan to allocate Opioid Settlement Funds, and an update on the first cohort of projects. It was through this implementation progress analysis that Administration realized a subset of projects from the first cohort may need additional time to expend authorized funds and achieve intended project outcomes.

As the 2023 Annual Report indicates, launching new projects with varying levels of complexity due to hiring and contracting needs led to a slow build-up to implementation. Hiring processes, including the need to request position authority of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, created the initial lag in launching programs. All projects were fully staffed by early 2024. Projects also underwent contracting and Request for Proposal (RFP) processes when needed, which require dedicated time.

Affected departments made accommodations in their implementation plans to compensate for delays, however, authorized funds are needed into FY26 to fully implement projects as designed.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item is directly related the County's strategic goals 2A: *Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity* and 3A: *Invest "upstream" to address root causes of health disparities*. The County seeks proposals that aim to address the opioid crisis utilizing multiple, innovative strategies including treatment, harm reduction, prevention and other strategies. Further, proposals must address one of the funding objectives derived from statewide listening sessions and recommendations from the City/County Opioid Heroin Task Force.

FISCAL EFFECT

Approval of this action will authorize the use of unspent Opioid Settlement Funds allocated to Cohort 1 projects through 12/31/26. This request has a net \$0 tax levy impact.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Joe Lamers, joseph.lamers@milwaukeecountywi.gov;
Ashley Adsit, ashley.adsit@milwaukeecountywi.gov;
Claire Miller, claire.miller@milwaukeecountywi.gov; and
Heather Wolfgram, heather.wolfgram@milwaukeecountywi.gov

PREPARED BY:

Heather Wolfgram, Strategy and Performance Project Manager

APPROVED BY:

Joseph Lamers, Strategy, Budget & Performance Office Director

JOSEPH LAMERS

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Resolution
Attachment B: Fiscal Note

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk